

FOCUS: Transportation

Strategies for the Year:

Seek and obtain resources necessary to improve the transportation system.

Provide leadership within the region to address transportation system needs.

Develop some alternative land use patterns to promote a more effective transportation system.

Deploy Community Character and Design policies in transportation projects.

Project

Federal and State Legislative Agenda

Description

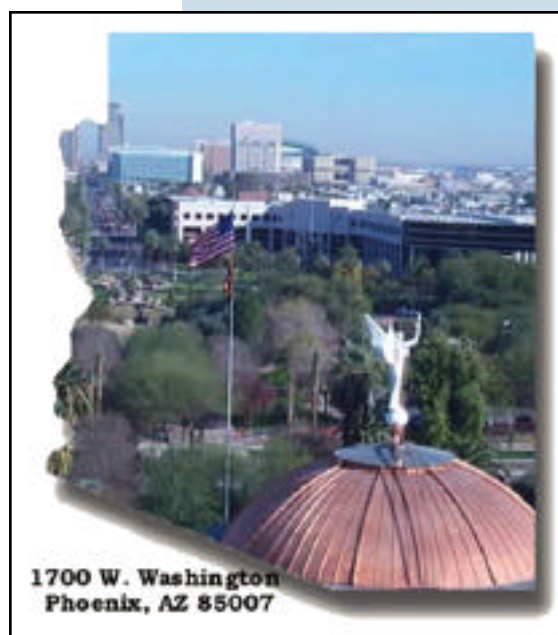
The City of Tucson benefits annually from the designation of funds for targeted projects by Congress through the Transportation Appropriations bill. City lobbyists follow the legislative agenda to protect regional revenue sources and to seek support for increased funds to the City of Tucson priorities. The re-authorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) is vitally important to Tucson for the continued authorization of public transit and related transportation projects that are funded through annual appropriations.

Accomplishments

The City's success in garnering Congressional support for Transportation projects continued in FY03. Key funded projects included:

- \$984,000 for bus replacements
- \$1,721,000 for the completion of phase 1 of the Sun Tran Northwest Maintenance and Storage Facility
- \$1 million for railroad grade crossing project
- \$625,000 for ER-LINK
- \$3,935,000 for the ongoing work to restore the Union Pacific Train Depot. The funding for the Depot will permit continued work on the Depot Plaza, City Hall Annex site and finalization of the Union Pacific Train Depot restoration.

The City successfully lobbied the state legislature for designation of primitive streets. This designation reduces the City's maintenance responsibilities for dirt streets.



Deploy Community Character and Design policies in Transportation projects.

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The Historic Depot: Downtown Intermodal Center

Description

The Downtown Tucson Intermodal Center Master Plan, after an extensive public involvement process, was approved by Mayor and Council in June of 1999. The project is an extensive plan that includes the eastern end of downtown, from 4th Avenue to Scott Avenue, and Congress Street to 6th Street. It includes elements for train, local transit, interstate (and international) bus service, shuttle, taxi, trolley, potential future light rail and high-speed rail, pedestrian improvements, transportation museum, parking, commercial, retail, and plaza space. It is a \$27 million project, most of which is scheduled to come from the private sector. The City has also obtained congressional earmarks and subsequent Federal Transit Agency grants for the work on the depot buildings, demolition activities, and other associated costs. The purchase of the depot property has been the primary source of local match money for these grants.

Accomplishments

The past year has been an exciting one at the depot. The substantial completion of construction Phase I – Asbestos abatement and demolition - was in October 2002. The Notice to Proceed for Phase II construction – Renovation – was issued January 7, 2003. The contractors (Lloyd Construction) are scheduled to complete work in early 2004. The construction work includes all the public spaces inside and outside the building, plus the tenant improvements for AmTrak. The leased spaces will be ready for future tenant improvements. In 2003 housing was added to the master plan and the plan adopted by Mayor and Council. The coordination of all the site elements is ongoing.

The locomotive #1673 was moved to the depot site (per the master plan) and the Locomotive Task Force helped to raise funds to build a shelter over the locomotive. That project was completed in 2002 with a grand opening in September 2002. Many of the community members who worked on that have now put their energies toward the transportation museum. The museum was established as a division of the Old Pueblo Trolley and efforts are focused on raising money to fund the museum operations. To date they have received approval of a Transportation Enhancement grant for \$397,050, and have been successful in obtaining an additional grant for the \$24,000 match required. We have received our environmental clearance (categorical exclusion) from the State of Arizona and are ready to proceed with the planning and implementation of the museum.



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Update PAG 2030 Action Plan

Description

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a detailed, multi-modal long-range plan for future transportation investments throughout eastern Pima County. The current update of the RTP will result in a blueprint for investing public revenues in our region's roadways, bikeways, bus, pedestrian, rail and aviation systems through the year 2030. The 2030 RTP will integrate policies, land use implications, and transportation plans of the City of Tucson and other local cities, towns, Pima County, transit agencies and the state. The 2030 RTP will also include a financial plan component identifying funding needs and revenue sources available to implement the plan.

Accomplishments

Working through a regional task force on which City staff participated, PAG has completed the first phase of public outreach. This public involvement phase identified the 2030 RTP Vision and Goals. The 2030 RTP Vision is an inclusive, people-focused plan to create an efficiently linked variety of transportation choices in a regional system that serves all people. Specific Goals include:

- develop multi-modal choices
- coordinate land use and transportation plans
- increase availability effective public transit
- improve cross-town mobility
- enhance safety
- promote efficiency, mobility, and accessibility.

The RTP Task Force is developing a list of specific projects that address the Vision and Goals through the rest of 2003 and will test the performance of the alternatives against the travel patterns of the 2030 population and employment projections.



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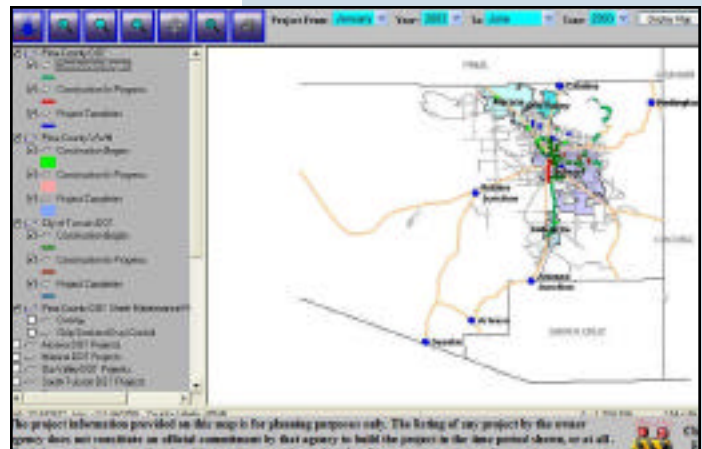
Project Construction Coordination with Pima County and ADOT

Description

Construction related roadway delays cause considerable frustration on the part of the traveling public. The transportation systems operated by the Arizona Department of Transportation, Pima County and the City of Tucson form a seamless network. The lack of coordination of the construction activities conducted by each of these agencies in the past has resulted in exacerbated travel delays and confusion to motorists. Improvements to the coordination of the multitude of projects handled by these individual agencies are planned through regular meetings and an electronic mapping database.

Accomplishments

Quarterly meetings have been established where Arizona Department of Transportation, Pima County and the City of Tucson have staff present upcoming projects and address any potential conflict. The electronic mapping database has been activated and is posted on the City's and County's Mapguide websites. Additional information related to traffic incidents within the City of Tucson as well as barricading permitting activity is also being tracked in real time on the City's Department of Transportation website: (http://tdotmaps.transview.org/mapguide_mwf_tdot.htm).



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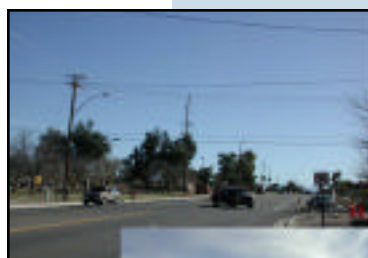
Undergrounding Tucson Electric Power Facilities

Description

The relocation of overhead utilities into conduit underground improves the aesthetics of our parks and roadways. In addition it increases the reliability of those utilities by eliminating the risk of storm events or traffic accidents knocking down the supporting poles. A portion of the franchise fee paid by Tucson Electric Power to the City of Tucson is set aside every year to support this effort. Opportunities to underground utilities in conjunction with existing TEP programs or projects impacting existing overhead lines are given the highest priority.

Accomplishments

This past year Tucson Electric Power finalized its campaign focused on improving the public image of its distribution system. Considerable coordination with the City was required, with the need for the City to relocate its fiber optic lines off of TEP poles and into newly placed underground conduit as well as granting underground easements at a number of locations. Lines were placed underground: along Camino Campestre just north of Reid Park, adjacent to Fort Lowell Park, at 22nd Street and 10th Avenue, in Himmel Park, around the Armory Park Senior Center and in El Presidio Neighborhood along Main Avenue.



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Operation Save Our Streets

Description

Keeping Tucson moving smoothly and safely on city streets is the top priority of the Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT). Performing appropriate maintenance on the City's major roadways will help us achieve our goal of ensuring the traveling public has the safest and best possible roadway surfaces on which to drive, bike and walk.

This summer, TDOT completed an aggressive program to fill potholes and crackseal all major City streets. "Operation Save Our Streets" was launched to protect the billion-dollar investment the citizens of Tucson have made in their transportation system.



Accomplishments

The program was a three-month, concentrated effort to make repairs on heavily used arterial and collector streets. Arterial streets, such as Broadway, Speedway and Grant Road, serve more than 50,000 vehicles per day. Collector streets, such as Tucson Boulevard, Pima Street and Glenn Street, carry approximately 15,000 vehicles per day. A crew of 70 employees was assigned to the project. "Hot-shot" crews also were deployed to focus on calls needing immediate attention. Equipment purchased for this project will enable the City to continue to repair potholes and replace distressed pavement.



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Roadway Access Management Policy

Description

The City of Tucson roadway system is an important asset that must be managed to guarantee safe movement of all modes of transportation. The Transportation Access Management Guidelines provide design parameters for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. The guidelines also include criteria for conducting Traffic Impact Studies to better manage and control development impacts to our existing and new roadways. The Guidelines help maintain our existing transportation system, allocate development responsibilities to those gaining the benefit, protect our desert environment and encourage quality development.

Accomplishments

The adoption of the Access Management Guidelines by Mayor and Council on March 17, 2003 has resulted in significant savings to the community through the requirements of developer-paid infrastructure improvements at new developments. The City of Tucson staff has been able to require additional turning lanes, contributions to traffic signals and pedestrian crossings that would not have been possible without this policy being in place. These include:

- 8 to 10 additional left or right turn lanes depending on the development at an average cost of about \$50,000 each. Total costs saving about \$400,000 to \$500,000 to the City and an increase in safety and a reduction in congestion.
- Contributions to pedestrian and vehicular traffic signals and installation of infrastructure for future signals at 5 to 10 locations at \$50,000 each which totals \$250,000 to \$500,000.
- The benefit of Traffic Impact Analysis by consultants for 5 to 10 locations that would not have to be provided by developers before at average cost of \$10,000 a piece. That would total about \$50,000 to \$100,000.

This policy has enabled staff and customers to better evaluate requests for roadway improvements that may decrease safety and increase congestion and provide alternate solutions to their concerns.



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Downtown Signage

Description

This program is a system of signs designed to make finding your way around downtown easier. The system utilizes a hierarchy of signs that unfolds as follows:

- General vehicular level signs located far away from downtown: these signs only indicate the direction to downtown.
- More detailed vehicular signs close to, and within, the downtown that list specific districts and popular destinations within each district.
- As the visitor nears downtown, even more specific signs indicate appropriate parking facilities for the particular destination.
- Finally, the customer finds their way to their destination on foot through pedestrian oriented signs originating from the area in which they have parked.

Accomplishments

The icons, or symbols, that represent each district have been finalized with the assistance of a stakeholder task force. Initial trial signs have been installed to assure readability and solicit input from the general public. Dozens of trailblazer signs are now being manufactured and installed throughout the City. This will be immediately followed by the installation of the more detailed destination specific and parking signs. Internally illuminated overhead signs will be manufactured and installed on Broadway and Congress as soon as two-way conversion plans are finalized. Approximately 400 signs have been removed from the downtown area to reduce visual clutter and make way for the new system.



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